

Escalation pathway of unprofessional behavior towards doctors and the role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

Bethany Carter

National Lead Guardian Support and Policy



**National
Guardian**

Freedom to Speak Up

Objectives



1 – To understand what speaking up is and why it is important



2 – To be aware of the role of the NGO



3 – To have a knowledge of speak up and escalation routes for a LED



4 – To be aware of barriers to speaking up; fear and futility



5 – To understand your role as leaders in supporting LEDs



6 – Case studies

“

**The silence of missing voices
costs careers, relationships
and lives**

”

Speak Up: say what needs to be said, hear what needs to be
heard

By Megan Reitz, 2019

What is Speaking Up?



Speaking up is a gift of information



Why is it important



When things go wrong, we need to make sure that lessons are learnt and things are improved.



If we think something **might go wrong**, it's important that we all feel able to speak up so that potential harm is prevented.



Even **when things are good**, but could be even better, we should feel able to say something and should expect that our suggestion is listened to and used as an opportunity for improvement.

Why is it important



PROTECTS PATIENT AND
WORKER SAFETY AND
EXPERIENCE



BUT TO WORK ALL LEADERS
NEED TO LISTEN UP AND
FOLLOW UP WITH ACTIONS

The National Guardian's office:

- Leads, trains and supports a network of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians in England
- Conducts speaking up reviews to identify learning and support improvement of the speaking up culture of the healthcare sector
- Provides challenge and learning to the healthcare system as a whole

Freedom to Speak Up Guardians work within their organisations to improve the speaking up culture and offer an additional route for workers to speak up and be heard.



Freedom to Speak Up Guardians

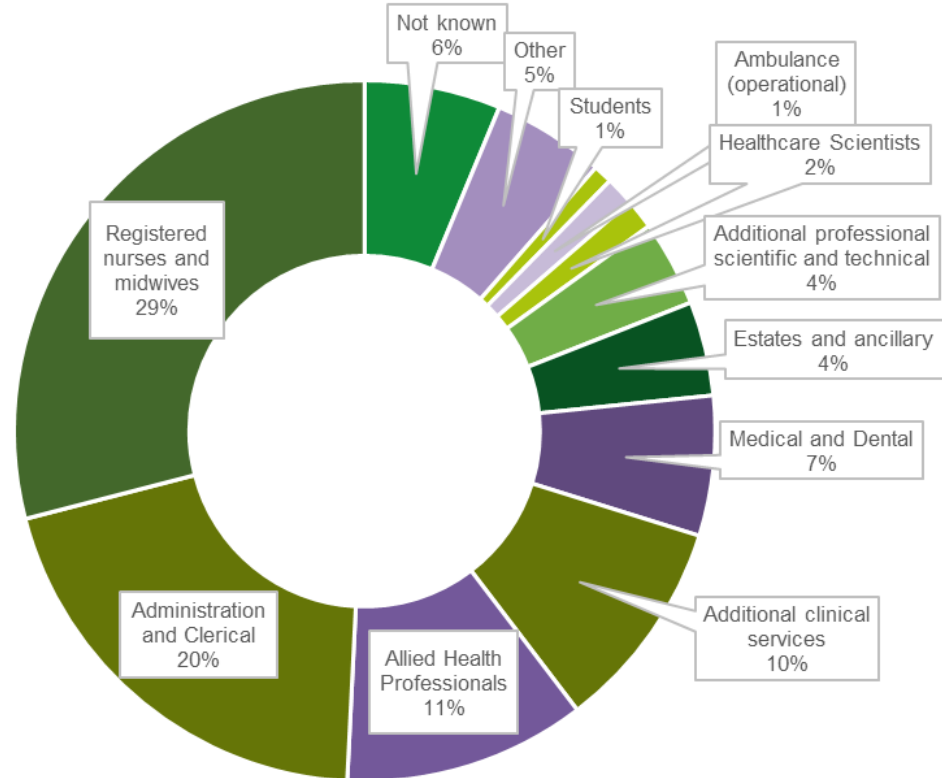


1078 Guardians
in over 650 organisations

25,382 cases
Raised with FTSU Guardians
in 2022/23

- Trusts
- Independent Provider
- National Body
- Hospice
- ICB/ICS
- Primary Medical Services
- Other

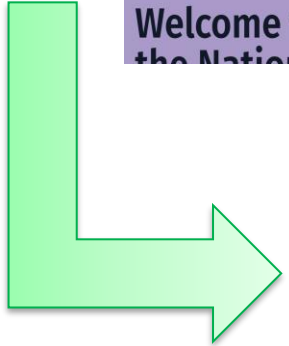
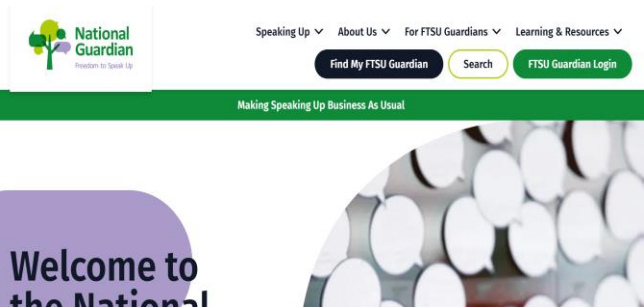
Who is speaking up to guardians?



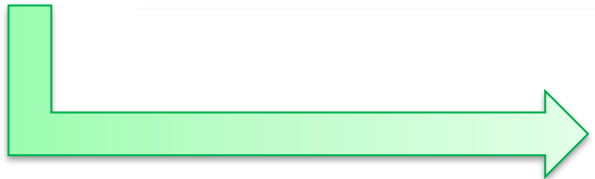
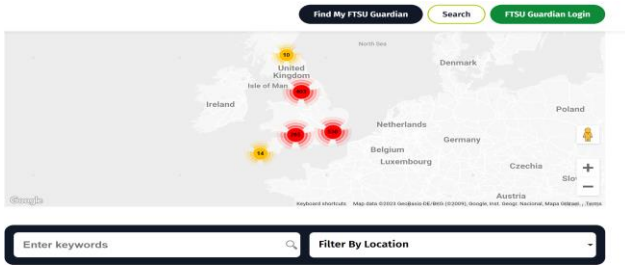
Find My Guardian

[The National Guardian's Office - Freedom to Speak Up](#)

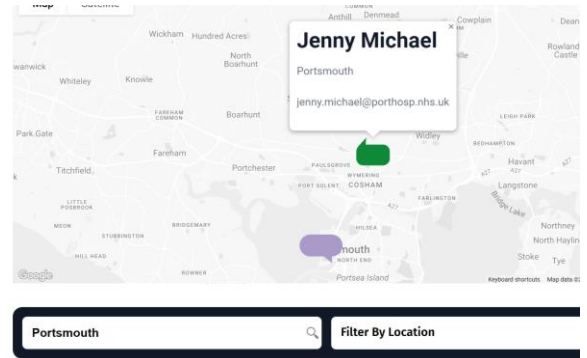
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2



3



Who can you Speak Up to?



Line Managers



Human Resources



Freedom to Speak Up Guardians

Regulators & Professional Bodies
e.g.



Others include...

- Speak Up Direct
- Protect
- Trades Union Congress
- The Law Society
- The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Who can you Speak Up to?

- [National FTSU Policy](#) (required to be adopted by all NHS organisations) sets out options:

Speaking up externally

If you do not want to speak up to someone within your organisation, you can speak up externally to:

- [Care Quality Commission](#) (CQC) for quality and safety concerns about the services it regulates – you can find out more about how the CQC handles concerns [here](#).
- [NHS England](#) for concerns about:
 - GP surgeries
 - dental practices
 - optometrists
 - pharmacies
 - how NHS trusts and foundation trusts are being run (this includes ambulance trusts and community and mental health trusts)
 - NHS procurement and patient choice
 - the national tariff.

Emerging Concerns protocol - If you would like to speak up about the conduct of a member of staff, you can do this by contacting the relevant professional body such as the General Medical Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health & Care Professions Council, General Dental Council, General Optical Council or General Pharmaceutical Council.

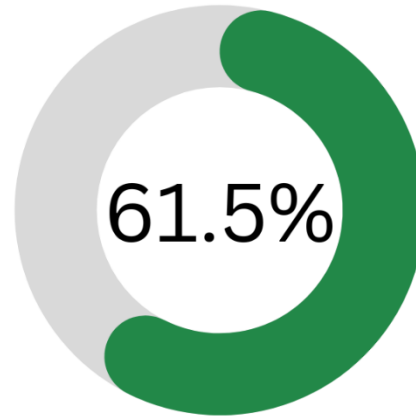
This results in:

- CQC receiving: c.1500-2000 cases per year (covering primary medical services and hospitals)
- NHS England receiving: 300-400 cases per year (covering primary and secondary care, and lately, ICBs too)

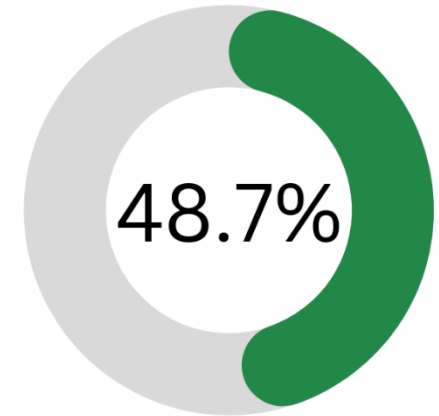
CQC and NHS England use the information from cases to inform their oversight and support roles. They do not investigate individual cases (although NHS England will do so by exception).



I feel safe to speak up about anything
that concerns me



If I spoke up about something that
concerned me I am confident my
organisation would address my concern



2022 NHS Staff Survey

Everyone has a voice

and

**Everyone has a role in improving an
organisations speak up culture**

What is your commitment today

The role of leaders

Supporting leaders to embed positive speaking up cultures in their organisation:

- Role model
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Encourage, promote, make it every day conversations
- Consider barriers and routes to overcome
- Zero tolerance of detriment
- Keep it at forefront of agenda
- Look at all your data (triangulation) and use to improve
- Training, policy implementation and reset
- Be curious



Principles for leaders and managers

- ① Value speaking up.
- ② Role-model speaking up and set a healthy Freedom to Speak Up culture.
- ③ Make sure workers know how to speak up and feel safe and encouraged to do so.
- ④ When someone speaks up, thank them, listen up and follow up.
- ⑤ Use speaking up as an opportunity to learn and improve.
- ⑥ Support Freedom to Speak Up guardians to fulfil their role in a way that meets workers' needs and National Guardian's Office requirements alike.
- ⑦ Identify and tackle barriers to speaking up.
- ⑧ Know the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation's speaking-up culture and take action to continually improve.

Pause for thought

“The standard you walk past
is the standard you accept.”

Chief of the Australian Army, Lieutenant-General David Morrison

Opportunity



- Revised Policy- even more inclusive, talking directly to staff groups that may have been reluctant to speak up in the past
- Aimed at all organisations that deliver or commission NHS Services
- All boards and primary care organisations to have approved the adoption of a new policy that reflects the new national policy template by 31 January 2024.



Guidance- Principle 7 Identify & tackle barriers to speaking up

By 31 January 2024, all trust boards will be expected to evidence in their Board papers:

- Results of the trust's assessment of its FTSU arrangements against the revised guidance.
- Assurance that it's on track with its FTSU improvement plan.

International Medical Doctor's experience

- An international medical doctor went to their Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, deeply distressed
- The guardian suggested she talk to her educational supervisor and write a statement. This was then investigated and resulted in a facilitated conversation.
- The speaking up experience was shared with colleagues, including the medical educational lead.
- As a result of one person speaking up, a forum was established to help promote a culture of speaking up and mitigate feelings of culture shock and social isolation by the international workforce.

“Without knowledge of how the system works, I found myself helpless and low in confidence,” said the doctor. “This led to low self-esteem which affected my sleep, my emotional and physical stability. My mind was blocked from fear.”

Improving worker experience

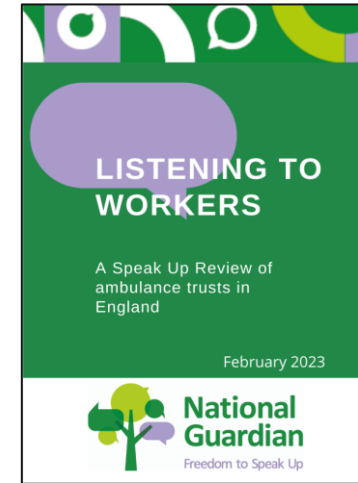
- A Freedom to Speak Up Guardian received an email from a worker, acting as spokesperson for a group who had concerns which they had raised previously with managers in their trust.
- The worker said, “We decided to speak to the guardian because as a group we were feeling exhausted, burnt out and the working environment was starting to impact on our home lives.”
- The guardian met with the group to discuss their concerns. Then met with senior managers, who arranged an urgent meeting with the team to discuss the issues.
- A list of outcomes were achieved, including; agreed communications arrangements to ensure the team felt informed and involved in future decision making.

The group said that the whole experience had been very positive and wanted to share their experience to encourage others to ‘speak up’.
“It finally felt that we were being listened to and our opinions and thoughts mattered”.

Saving thousands of pounds

- An administration support officer, felt that too much money was being wasted on stationery resources and contacted her Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.
- The guardian raised the issue with the trust's Director of Finance, who immediately commissioned an external review of stationery resources. This found that there were indeed thousands of pounds tied up in stationery cupboards.
- As a result of one person speaking up, the trust expects to save £200,000 a year on printer ink alone, with approximately a further £200,000 per year being saved on all stationery costs.

“This case has highlighted to me as Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, that nothing is too small to speak up about to make a difference.”



Thank you



www.nationalguardian.org.uk



national-guardian's-office



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#FTSU